

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 DEAE-00  
CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00  
SNM-05 TRSE-00 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 INRE-00 L-03  
/055 W

-----001992 052158Z /63

O 052058Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7325

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 3180

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SNAR, CO  
SUBJECT: "60" MINUTES TV PROGRAM/ ON ALLEGATIONS ABOUT  
INVOLVEMENT OF JULIO CESAR TURBAY IN NARCOTICS  
TRAFFICKING

REF: STATE 85430

1. I GAVE LIBERAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, JULIO CESAR TURBAY, A LETTER ON APRIL 3 IN RESPONSE TO HIS OF THE SAME DATE (SEPTEL). IN NEGOTIATING THE CONTENT OF THE LETTER, HOWEVER, SOME CHANGES WERE MADE IN VARIANCE WITH MY TELCONS WITH BARNABY AND COX AND PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE REFTEL. THE URGENCY OF SUBMITTING THE LETTER PRIOR TO THE LOCAL DEADLINE FOR PUBLICATION THE NEXT MORNING DID NOT PERMIT SUFFICIENT TIME FOR CONSULTATION. TURBAY INSISTED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO PREEMPT THE ANTICIPATED WIRE SERVICE COVERAGE ON THE APRIL 2 CBS TELEVISION PROGRAM IN ORDER TO DEFUSE ITS IMPACT.

2. TURBAY ARGUED THAT THE STATEMENT "IT IS THE POSITION OF MY GOVERNMENT THAT WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE  
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OF INVOLVEMENT ON YOUR PART IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING" SHOULD READ "IT IS THE POSITION OF MY GOVERNMENT THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE ON YOUR PART IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING". HE STATED THAT THE QUESTION OF UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS WAS AMPLY AIRED IN THE FIRST AND PUNULTIMATE PARAGRAPHS. HE SAW NO REASON TO REITERATE IT IN THIS PARTICULAR SENTENCE AND

OBJECTED TO THE JUXTAPOSTION OF "UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS" WITH THE WORD "GOVERNMENT." HE ALSO ASKED "AS A FRIEND" THAT IN ADDITION TO MY SAYING THE ALLEGATIONS WERE "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" IS HOULD ADD THE WORD "ABSURD". HE ASKED FOR THE INCLUSION OF SEVERAL OTHER STATEMENTS THAT WERE CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE, AND IN THE INTEREST OF MAINTAINING HIS GOODWILL, I FOUND IT POLITIC TO MAKE THESE TWO CHANGES.

3. TRUBAY EXPRESSED HIS GREAT GRATITUDE WITH REGARD TO THIS ASSISTANCE, BOTH TO ME PERSONALLY AND TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. HIS PUBLIC REACTION (SEPTTEL) HAS BEEN CONSISTENT WITH THAT POINT OF VIEW. SEVERAL OF HIS CLOSEST ASSOCIATES HAVE ALSO INFORMED US OF THE GENUINENESS OF HIS POSITIVE REATION TO US.

4. I SPOKE TO PRESIDENT LOPEZ WHOSE VIEW IT IS THAT WE HAVE EMERGED FROM THIS PARTICULAR SITUATION WITH GOOD GRACE AND IN A POSITIVE MANNER. THE PRESIDENT IS TAKING A LINE WITH HIS CABINET AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THAT THE CBS PROGRAM REPRESENTED MORE AN ATTACK ON THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND THAT THE COLOMBIAN CONTEXT WAS ONLY INCIDENTAL. MY ONE PRINCIPAL CONCERN DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE EVENTS WAS THE POSSIBLE REACTION OF THE CONSERVATIVES, AND PARTICULARLY CONSERVATIVE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, CONFIDENTIAL

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BELISARIO BETANCUR. I RAN INTO BETANCOUR AT A SOCIAL FUNCTION AND HE ASSURED ME OF HIS VIEW THAT WE HAD DONE THE PROPER THING. HE CONSIDERED THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST TURBAY "AN INFAMY" AND SAID THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF INJECTING SUCH ALLEGATIONS INTO THE CAMPAIGN. HE HAD JUST COME FROM TAPING A TV BROADCAST WHERE HE HAD MADE SUCH A STATEMENT.

5. IN GENERAL, I BELIEVE WE HAVE EMERGED WITH A WHOLE SKIN IN THIS EPISODE AND WITH A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF GOODWILL ON THE PART OF TURBAY. THE ANGER, ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS (SEPTTEL), APPEARS TO BE DIRECTED ESSENTIALLY AT CBS AND NOT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

6. WHERE WE HAVE NOT EMERGED UNSCATHED IS WITH REGARD TO THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IT WAS AGREED THAT I WOULD RESPOND TO THE MINISTER'S LETTER REQEUSTING THE NATURE OF THE INFORMATION OUR FILES CONTAINED ON HIM (STATE 57430). THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED N MARCH 28 (SEPTTEL). IT HAD BEEN AGREED WITH THE MINISTER THAT HE WOULD SPONSOR AN

INCREASED MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN THE NARCOTICS  
INTERDICTION PROGRAM AND SEVERAL MEETINGS WERE HELD  
TO COORDINATE SUCH PARTICIPATION WITH THE EMBASSY  
AND THE COLOMBIAN ATTORNEY GENERAL. THE RESULT HAS  
BEEN PROMISING WITH AN INCREASING INTEREST ON THE PART  
OF THE MILITARY IN A MARIJUANA ERADICATION PROGRAM  
AND INTERDICTION OF CLANDESTINE AIR STRIPS, AS WELL  
AS MILITARY UNIT SUPPORT FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE  
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S NARCOTICS UNIT. IT HAD ALSO BEEN  
AGREED THAT THE MINISTER'S RESPONSE TO MY LETTER WOULD  
BE CAREFULLY COORDINATED. HOWEVER, THE MINISTER'S  
RESPONSE ON APRIL 4 (SEPTTEL) WAS VERY STRONGLY  
WORDED AND CONTAINED SOME INTEMPERATE REMARKS ON THE  
NATURE AND QUALITY OF OUR INTELLIGENCE, AND ON THE  
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DIGNITY OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMED FORCES AND ITS  
MINISTER. MY REACTION AS COMMUNICATED TO THE MINISTER'S  
EMISSARY WAS THAT THESE REMARKS WERE ILL-ADVISED SINCE  
THEY HAD THE POTENTIAL FOR CONTINUING THE CONTROVERSY

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CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00  
SNM-05 TRSE-00 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 INRE-00 L-03  
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O 052058Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7326

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 3180

AND OPENING QUESTIONS IN THE MEDIA WHICH APPEARED  
TO BE RESPONDING TO A POSITIVE FASHION, AND IN ANY  
CASE, GAVE EVERY INDICATION OF RUNNING DOWN. I ALSO  
POINTED OUT MY VIEW THAT SUCH EXCESSIVE RHETORIC  
GAVE ME THE IMPRESSION OF PROTESTING OVERMUCH AND MIGHT

BE DAMAGING TO THE MINISTER'S POSITION. UNFORTUNATELY,  
THE MINISTER HAD APPARENTLY RELEASED THE LETTER TO  
THE PRESS BY THE TIME IT WAS DELIVERED TO ME. THIS  
MORNING'S PRESS CARRIES THE TEXT OF THE MINISTER'S  
LETTER BUT IN MUCH LESS PROMINENT FASHION THAN WAS  
THE CASE WITH MY EXCHANGE WITH TURBAY. IT IS TOO  
EARLY TO TELL WHAT REACTIONS MIGHT BE GENERATED BUT  
WE REMAIN ALERT TO LIMITING ANY DAMAGE TO THE NARCOTICS  
PROGRAM OR TO THE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN YESTERDAY'S  
MEDIA COVERAGE.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CORRUPTION, DRUG TRAFFIC, DIPLOMATIC NOTES, TELEVISION BROADCASTING, ALLEGATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** SNAR, SOPN, CO, US, (TURBAY, JULIO CESAR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
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20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014